

# Panfish - Crappie, Bluegill and Perch

They don't call crappie and bluegill "panfish" for nothing. They're some of Idaho's best eating gamefish. Plus, they're fun – abundant and relatively easy to catch. Panfish are tailor-made for great kid fishing and provide lots of action.

Spring and early summer are the best times to fish for these species because they are spawning in shallow water close to shore. They travel in schools, and once found, the fishing can be fast and furious.

Popular destinations for **crappie** include Hayden Lake near Coeur d'Alene, Mann Lake near Lewiston, Brownlee and C.J. Strike reservoirs in southern Idaho, and Glendale Reservoir in southeast Idaho.

**Bluegill** are distributed across the state in many lakes and small ponds. The best fishing for bluegill is generally in the southern portion of the state.

**Yellow perch** are also widespread, but inhabit larger water bodies such as Magic Reservoir, C.J. Strike Reservoir and Lake Cascade.



Evin Oneale, IDFG

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***They don't all weigh 3 1/2 pounds!  
Nine-year-old Jason Monson caught  
this state record crappie in 2003  
at Brownlee Reservoir***

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Evin Oneale, IDFG

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***Abundant and easy to catch, bluegill  
are a great choice for young anglers***

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Panfishing equipment includes lightweight rods, light line (4 pound test or less), and a variety of small lures and/or bait. Perch can be caught using worms or strips of cutbait fished close to the bottom. Crappie will go after 1/16 ounce or smaller jigs with plastic bodies in a variety of colors. Bluegill can be caught on small artificial lures, worms and jigs; focus on shallow shoreline areas. Be sure to use small hooks (size 12 or smaller), small bait and a small bobber.

While there are no limits on panfish in most Idaho waters, please keep only as many fish as you can properly care for and eat.



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